Minimum Services the rural housing shortage can be met.

Target for construction or houses under Indira Awaas Yojana

869. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the target of constructing 11,23,560 houses under IAY has been achieved during 1996-97;

(b) if so, whether the target has exceeded and by how much;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the gap in the target; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to see that the targets are being achieved?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of 'a' above, question does not arise.

(c) As against the target of 11,23,560 houses under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) during 1996-97, more than 8 lakh houses have been constructed. The per unit upper ceiling limit under IAY was revised from Rs. 14,000 to Rs. 20,000 for plain areas and from Rs. 15,800 to Rs, 22,000 for hill/difficult areas w.e.f. 1.8.96. There was no hike in the allocations to the States under IAY commensurate with this increase in upper permissible ceiling limits under IAY. In view of this States/ UTs could not achieve fully the targets allocated to them during 1996-97 based on the earlier ceiling limits.

(d) Concerned State Secretaries during various review meetings have been re quested to ensure that the targets are achieved. Close monitoring is also being done by the Ministry.

Shortcomings of Panchayati Raj System regarding 33 per cent representation to women

870. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

fa) whether Government are aware that the Panchayati Raj System giving 33 per cent representation to women has not been functioning in a number of States as envisaged;

(b) if so, the main shortcomings that have come to light in various States; and

(c) whether Government propose to undertake a detailed study of the various problems being faced in respect of the functioning of women Sarpanch in different States in order to take necessry steps for real empowerment of women?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) and (b) As per the provision of Article 243 D of the Constitution, not Jess than one-third of the total number of seats and offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats are to be reserved for women. These are mandatory provisions which have to be complied with scrupulously,

(c) The working of Panchayati Raj Institutions including the participation of women sarpanches are reviewed by the Government of India from time to time and remedical measures to improve the panchayati raj system have been recommended to the States. Training of PRI representatives, with special focus on women is also being taken up for meaningful participation of women in the Pan* chayati Raj system.